

The HIGHLANDS Current



Did Beacon Save a President?
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MARCH 1, 2019

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Human Trafficking Happens Here, Legislators Told

*Montgomery: 'Nobody
wants to talk about this'*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

A week after Sheriff Robert Langley briefed legislators, a second county official reiterated that human trafficking occurs in Putnam County, including children who are turned into sex slaves to benefit predatory adults — including, at times, a parent.

MaryBeth Ross, prevention and community outreach coordinator for the county Department of Social Services, discussed the issue with the Legislature's Health, Social, Educational and Environmental Committee on Feb. 21 in Carmel.

Like Langley, Ross reported that in 2018 Putnam had two human-trafficking cases that triggered federal investigations and that other cases are probably occurring.

Human trafficking is "an epidemic in this country," she said. "What we're talking about is selling children for sex. It's everywhere."

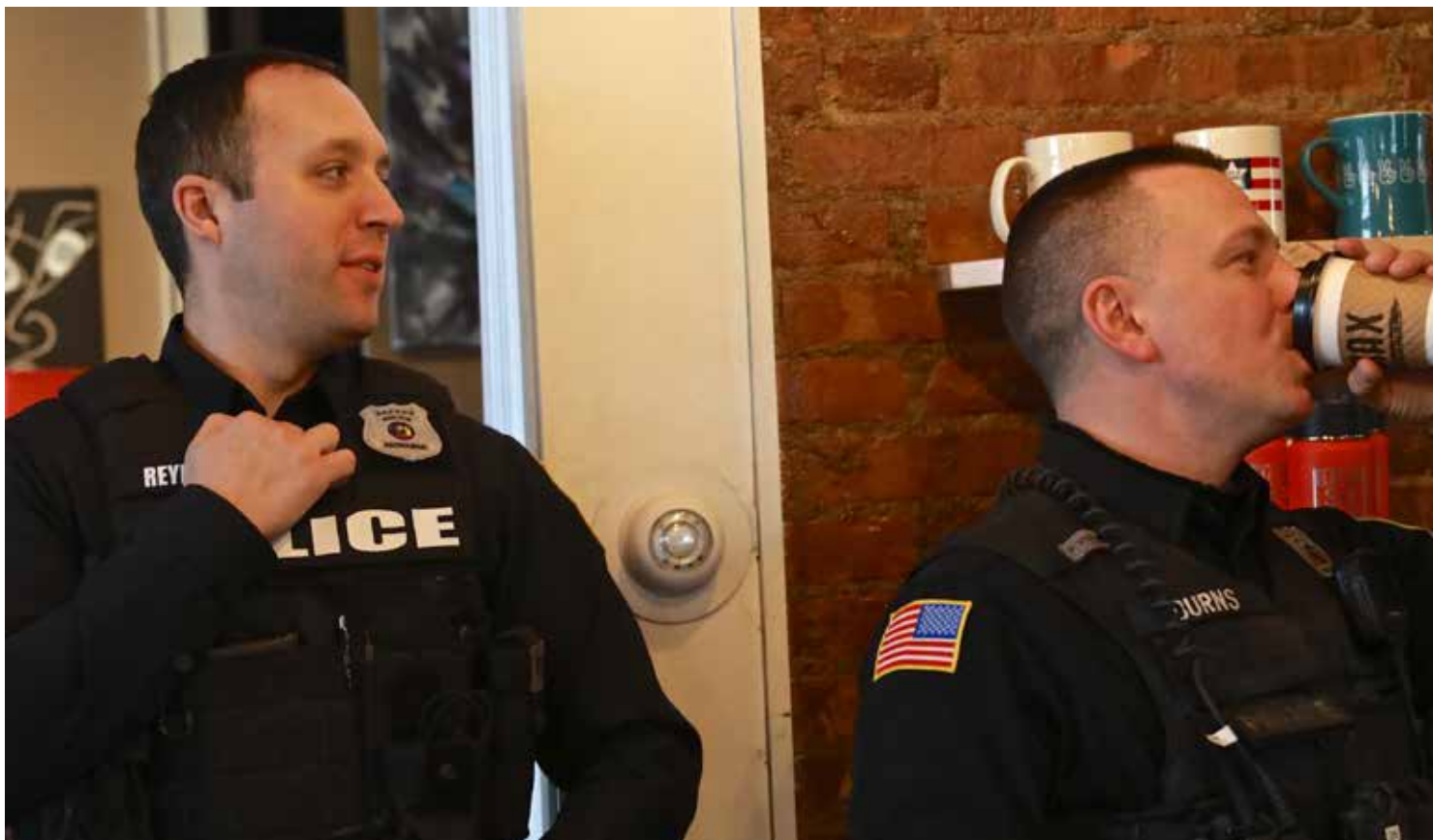
Last year, federal officials, with assistance from the Putnam County Sheriff's Office, freed a 17-year-old Montrose girl, who, they said, was being prostituted by her mother in Brewster.

Ross focused on child victims, but human trafficking more often involves adults who are compelled to work or provide sex through force, fraud or coercion. It is thought to be one of the most profitable criminal enterprises in the world alongside drug and arms trafficking.

(A day after the Feb. 21 committee meeting, the issue made national news when authorities in Jupiter, Florida, broke up an apparent human-trafficking ring involving Chinese immigrants forced to work as prostitutes. Two dozen people, including Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, and John Havens, a former CEO of Citigroup, were charged with solicitation.)

Locally, the FBI operates a task force in the Hudson Valley that works with local and state police to combat human trafficking and Dutchess County has one

(Continued on Page 3)



BLUE AND BREW — Officers from the Beacon Police Department, including Aaron Reynolds and Jason Burns, descended on the Bank Square Coffeehouse on Monday (Feb. 25) not because anyone was disturbing the peace but to talk with members of the community as part of a two-hour "Coffee with a Cop" event. The police department even picked up the tab — and, yes, someone brought doughnuts from Glazed Over.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Odell Looking for New Bodyguard ... Sort Of

*County position
provides 'personal
security' for executive*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong and Chip Rowe

Putnam County says it's looking for a director of constituent services whose duties include providing "personal security" and "transport" for County Executive MaryEllen Odell.

But the county also says the person who has held the job since 2011, Nicholas DePerno Jr., isn't going anywhere. A representative of the Personnel Department said state law requires the position must be advertised "to prove there's nobody else who's qualified."

The county must do that because DePerno, 59, a retired Putnam County Sheriff's Department investigator, has a state-issued waiver that allows him to collect a pension from the Sheriff's Department and a salary from the county. Employees who have taxpayer-funded jobs and retire before age 65 with a pension must have a waiver if they

take another taxpayer-funded position that pays more than \$30,000 a year.

DePerno earns \$44,500 annually working for Odell and also receives a \$59,000 yearly pension from his 25 years with the Sheriff's Department. He took the county job, which Odell created, three months af-

ter his retirement and three days after she was elected to fill an unexpired term.

Odell did not reply to a list of questions emailed to her, or to a follow-up phone message, instead referring *The Current* to the county's personnel director, Paul Eldridge.

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Nicholas DePerno Jr. (left) with Odell at a January 2013 press conference in Carmel where then-County Clerk Dennis Sant said he would refuse to comply with a Freedom of Information Law request issued by *The Journal News* for a list of registered gun owners

Putnam County



FIVE QUESTIONS: JOANNE GIORDANO

By Michael Turton

Joanne Giordano recently purchased a 1939 Power Wagon Dodge flatbed truck that she plans to display outside Vera's Philipstown Market, which she runs with her mother, Vera, and brother, Dominick.

Why did you buy the truck?

I love American history and have a house full, and barns full, of old stuff. So many wonderful souls have touched these things, and each has a story. My husband and I do a lot of antiquing and 10 years ago he showed me a beautiful old truck outside a nursery in Yorktown Heights. I decided then and there that I had to do that on Route 9. I had to have an old truck.

How did you find the Dodge?

Someone who has been looking for a truck for me for four or five years found it upstate, two hours north, at a farm with about 15 old cars and trucks on the property, mostly from the 1950s and 1960s. I never thought I'd find one this old. When I saw it, I did a backflip! And when I realized that 1939 was the year my father was born, I knew it was a sign. The truck sat in a wooded area for the past 20 years, so hidden in brush we drove right past it. Dislodging it was difficult. It was New Year's Eve, cold and muddy. We had to cut through thick, thorny brush. Blood was shed dealing with those thorns. The wheels were sunk a foot into the ground.



Joanne Giordano and her '39 Dodge

Photo by M. Turton

It took us nine hours, but pulling it out of that woods was like watching a birth.

What did you pay?

I won't divulge that. But God loves me and I love the farmer who sold it to me. He's in his 70s and I'll forever feel privileged to have something that meant so much to him, something he had since he was in his 20s. He had worked on it in a heavy equipment program in high school. When it came up for sale, he had to have it. His dream was to restore it but he wasn't able to.

What does your mother think?

She comes from poverty in Italy. To her, old things are hand-me-downs. She sees the truck as rusty and used, but she loves that customers like it so much. One el-

derly lady told me, "I've got a '42 and that thing will climb a tree!"

What are your plans for it?

I won't paint the exterior, just power wash it, to keep the patina. We're fixing the flatbed with old wood, replacing the glass and we'll re-cover the original seats. I don't have a name for it yet, but it's a boy because there's a crank to start the motor. We're going to have a contest and have customers submit names. I want it to be something beautiful for everyone who drives by. I'll fill it with flowers, decorate it for Halloween and for Christmas maybe put a tree in it with battery-operated lights. I want it to look like it's been here forever. I can't wait until the weather breaks. There's a lot of work to do.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

What has been your most exciting outdoor recreation experience?

Swimming in a glacier near Juneau, Alaska. Exhilarating!



~ Moira Cervone, Garrison

Dune surfing in a Land Rover in the Arabian Desert in the United Arab Emirates.



~ Ed Manner, Beacon

Cliff diving, twice, in Negril, Jamaica. And my top came off!



~ Teri Rebote, Cold Spring

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Trafficking *(from Page 1)*

based in its Department of Community and Family Services.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline says it received 333 credible reports from callers in New York in 2017, and that since 2007 it has heard from more than 2,500 victims in the state. During that same period, more than 1,000 referrals were made in New York, usually by police officers, to assist victims. Eighty percent of the cases involved sex trafficking and a quarter were from the region that includes Putnam and Dutchess counties.

"A lot of people don't believe this can happen in a small county like Putnam," said Legislator Toni Addonizio, who chairs the Health Committee, at the Feb. 21 meeting.

"This is not something we really think about," added Legislator Paul Jonke.

And "nobody wants to talk about this," said Legislator Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown.

Yet the victims — or "survivors," Ross said — "are your neighbors, your kids. They are here and they are everywhere." She added that she's seen a recent increase of internet-related sexual exploitation.

Asked if human trafficking usually involves immigrants, Ross said that "83 percent of our victims are domestic." At

times, parents with financial difficulties or drug addiction "will traffic their own children," she said. In other cases, she noted, adults act as romantic interests to entice youngsters, who are often runaways, homeless, in foster care or otherwise vulnerable. Many are girls aged 12 through 14. Some are lured by promises of cell phones, expensive purses and other luxury items, she said, and some "don't realize they're being trafficked."

Moreover, some teenagers return to trafficking almost as soon as they are freed, she said. Whatever the situation, outreach workers try to talk to them, so "when they're ready, we're there to help," she said.

Safe Harbour Putnam County, a program run by the county's Child Advocacy Center and funded by the state, provides services to children who were trafficked, or are at risk of being trafficked, Ross said. She said the resources it and affiliate agencies offer include medical and psychiatric care, drug addiction treatment, emergency shelter, and legal and immigration advice.

In addition, Ross said, she and other advocates have met with school district administrators and talked with bus drivers and aides and other staff about identifying situations in which students may be at risk for being trafficked.

Putnam County Considers Climate Smart

Montgomery pushes for certification

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

In a presentation on Feb. 21, Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown on the Putnam County Legislature, urged her colleagues to have the county join the state's Climate Smart Communities initiative.

Participating municipalities agree to take steps to reduce carbon emissions, decrease pollution and fight global warming. In return, they can receive consideration for state aid. Philipstown began working toward Climate Smart certification in 2017; Beacon and Nelsonville are likewise involved.

The sole Democrat on the nine-person Legislature, Montgomery was elected in November, after supporting Climate Smart efforts as a town councilor in Philipstown. She said that as she familiarized herself with county government, she realized that "we're well on our way to accomplishing" basic Climate Smart goals already. As examples, she cited installation of energy-efficient lighting, environmentally friend-

lier road management and county car fleet practices, and improvements at the jail.

Speaking during a meeting of the Economic Development Committee, Montgomery pointed out that participating municipalities have received grants for stormwater management and minimizing flood threats. Putnam, too, might pursue Climate Smart certification and get help for "projects that the county needs to do anyway," she said. "It would just be a win-win."

Other legislators expressed openness to the idea but called for further review. But Legislator Ginny Nacerino, who said she had unsuccessfully proposed Putnam join the initiative four years ago, offered her endorsement. "It would behoove us to move forward with this," she said.

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How to Report Trafficking

If you believe you are the victim of a trafficking situation or may have information about a potential trafficking situation, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 888-373-7888, text INFO to 2333733 or visit humantraffickinghotline.org. Locally, the Putnam/Northern Westchester Women's Resource Center (845-628-2166) and Safe Homes of Orange County in Newburgh (845-562-5340) both have 24-hour hotlines.

New York Victims

Number of confirmed victims, 2007-2017: **1,022**

Percent who were minors: **27**

Percent who were women: **88**

Percent involved in sex trafficking: **79**

Percent from New York City metro area: **70**

Total arrests for human trafficking, 2017: **85**

Source: New York Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking

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Secor easement

To my knowledge no one on the Nelsonville Village Board opposes a conservation easement on the 4-acre, village-owned Secor Street parcel ("Nelsonville Debates Proposed Secor Easement," Feb. 22).

As mayor, I assigned Trustee Michael Bowman to explore with the Open Space Institute how an easement might be created that would still permit village use of the property for certain municipal purposes. He presented to the board a proposal prepared by OSI's lawyers. I told him to have our village attorney, Robert Lusardi, review the proposal. He failed to do so.

When I discovered this, I sent the proposal to Mr. Lusardi, whose opinion was that the easement proposal presented serious state constitutional issues. Further legal research, he said, was needed. He also observed that the easement would significantly reduce the financial value of a village asset.

I arranged a special board session with Mr. Lusardi so that board members could hear his opinions unfiltered by me. The discussion was — how shall I say it? — spirited. At our regular board meeting on Feb. 19, the issue was raised again. While attacking our village attorney, who has faithfully served the village for 35 years, Trustee Bowman argued OSI's legal position, though he is not a lawyer. He said that if conservation easements on Nelsonville Woods and Nelsonville Park did not violate the state constitution, why should the Secor easement?

I'm not a lawyer and can't argue law. But I can lay out a few facts. The Nelsonville Woods was created by a gift from Ginsberg Development to the village. The gift was contingent on an OSI easement restricting its uses. Nelsonville Park was a gift from OSI (it had been a home site where the house burned down) to Nelsonville with an easement restricting its uses. Both easements were created before Nelsonville took ownership.

The 4-acre Secor parcel was a gift to Nelsonville from Lone Star Industries in 1971. No restrictions were imposed on the use of this parcel, meaning Nelsonville could sell the property for a single family home. For how much? Two hundred thousand dollars? Three hundred thousand dollars? That's almost our entire annual budget.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Tell us what you think

The Current welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing for accuracy, clarity and length. We ask that writers remain civil and avoid personal attacks. Letters may be emailed to editor@highlandscurrent.org or mailed to Editor, The Highlands Current, 161 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516. The writer's full name, village or city, and email or phone number must be included, but only the name and village or city will be published.

Suppose in 20 years Nelsonville needs a new water supply? Former boards contemplated siting wells here to create a source of drinking water. Would OSI allow this use? Perhaps. But a future board would have to get OSI permission for any proposed use.

My strong opinion — shared by other board members — is that before we make so fateful and permanent a decision this easement must be thoroughly legally vetted and subjected to broad input from village residents, either through public hearings or, better yet, a referendum. We owe that to all Nelsonville residents, current and future.

Trustee Bowman — a Secor area resident — seems hell-bent to plunge ahead with the easement, so much so that he is apparently leading an insurgency in our upcoming elections. He is campaigning for two other Secor-area residents for trustees. In my opinion this is a blatant attempt to hijack the board and create a pro-easement voting bloc.

These candidates say they have a vision for Nelsonville. They sure do, but it's not the welfare of the whole village. Trustee Bowman wants to paint their opposition as anti-OSI. False. He and his insurgent candidates are whispering that I am pro-development and pro-cell tower. Shameful. A volunteer Planning Board head for many years, I stopped a 150-plus condo unit development in Nelsonville. I was personally sued in state and federal court. Now I'm back again in federal court defending our village against suits filed by two telecom giants.

Bill O'Neill, *Nelsonville*

Waterfront puzzle

In his Reporter's Notebook in the Feb. 15 issue, Michael Turton outlined what he called "Cold Spring's riverfront puzzle." I would add the puzzle is bigger than just Dockside because of the proximity of the Highway Department facility to Mayor's

Park, and the possible Fair Street frontage of the decaying gas station.

Christopher Daly, *Cold Spring*

Hate-crime charge

We were relieved to see some action has been taken regarding the anti-Semitic graffiti in Nelsonville ("Philipstown Resident Charged with Hate Crimes," Feb. 22). We are keenly aware of the dangers of complacency in the face of hate, and as Jewish residents of Philipstown, we felt this particular act acutely.

We question why the 18-year-old resident of Highlands Falls is being adjudicated as a "youthful offender" and think a further explanation from the district attorney is warranted. And while we respect the right to privacy of anyone under 18, it is horrifying to know that there is a 17-year-old kid in Garrison who is so vehemently anti-Semitic. We only hope that the community will continue to educate their children to value and respect all religions, races and ethnicities.

Heidi and Michael Bender, *Cold Spring*
Editor's note: Although the two unnamed suspects in the case are eligible for youthful offender status, the district attorney's office says it has not yet decided whether they will receive it.

Recycling

Crew Chief Robert Downey of the Cold Spring Highway Department was right when he said at a meeting of the Village Board that "we should be doing a lot more recycling" ("Merandy Says He Will Run Again," Feb. 22). The best way to improve the situation would be to give residents a way to save money the more they recycle.

This could be accomplished in two steps. First, add a charge for garbage collection to the water bill and stop covering those expenses out of the village's general fund (this is done in thousands of communities already). Second, adopt a system for making collection charges proportional to weight or volume, with a credit for recyclables.

There are many options, from weighing at the point of collection, to a bag distribution system (only official bags would be collected, and how many each resident used would be tracked). Communities adopting strong incentives recycle more — up to 80 percent, versus our measly 30 percent. It works!

Michael Armstrong, *Cold Spring*

Snow days

In reply to Zoe Antitch's letter in the Feb. 22 issue questioning whether school officials should call fewer snow days, I would not want to be in the position of having to make these decisions about weather-related delays. You can never make everyone happy, and frankly, it's not about making everyone happy. It's about making the best

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

effort to keep everyone safe.

People have to recognize that this decision does not come lightly and it's not about them and their inconvenience. Just because their child could safely make it to school doesn't mean that his teacher and classmates can. Even those who live close enough to walk to school face treacherous conditions, unshoveled walkways, and risks from slippery conditions, falling ice and downed tree limbs or power lines.

Buses face even more treacherous conditions as they try to navigate roads like Lane Gate and East Mountain Road South. There can be considerable changes in conditions within just a couple of miles. What looks like no big deal in the village can be impassable a mile uphill.

The people who make these decisions have the lives of our children, teachers and staff in their hands. I appreciate that they take time to consider safety first, and take all the factors into account before making a decision. This must be a monumental and mostly thankless task. It's made considerably more difficult when people complain either way.

The school's responsibility and priority is keeping kids and staff safe. A parent's responsibility is to have contingency plans in place in the event of inclement weather. I applaud the school and the parties in charge of making these decisions for using their best judgment to keep staff and students safe.

Eileen Denehy, *Cold Spring*

Hustis Enters Cold Spring Mayor's Race

D.A. Tendy also says he will run again

Charles "Chuck" Hustis III says he plans to run for mayor of the Village of Cold Spring in the Nov. 5 election. He will be

challenging incumbent Dave Merandy, who is seeking his third term ("Merandy Says He Will Run Again," Feb. 22).

Hustis said he plans to run independently, without forming a ticket with potential candidates for two trustee seats that will also be on the ballot. Incumbent Trustees Marie Early and Frances Murphy have both said they will seek re-election.

Hustis was elected to the Cold Spring Village Board in 2010 and re-elected in 2012. He ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the Haldane school board in 2015.

In Carmel, Putnam County District Attorney Robert Tendy, a Republican who was elected to a four-year term in 2015, said he plans to campaign to keep his seat.

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

By Lucy Freilich, Garrison

Taken on Feb. 16 at
Little Stony Point in
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Bidding Documents, on CD, in PDF format, will be available, at no cost, to all prospective bidders. The CD's will be available at Fuller and D'Angelo, P.C., 45 Knollwood Road, Suite 401, Elmsford, NY 10523; telephone number 914.592.4444. A \$15.00 shipping fee will be required for CD's requested to be mailed.

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Who Vaccinates?

By Chip Rowe

New York State require students in grades kindergarten through grade 12 in public and private schools to be vaccinated against diphtheria,

hepatitis B, measles, mumps, pertussis, polio, tetanus and varicella (chickenpox) unless a parent or guardian is granted a medical or religious exemption by the school. Health officials have been concerned because of the re-emergence of measles in areas with relatively low vaccination rates. Last year Orthodox Jewish communities in Brooklyn and Rockland County were hit. In an outbreak in Clark County, Washington, where the vaccination rates among schoolchildren is about 78 percent, there

have been 49 cases so far this year. For measles, the vaccination threshold to prevent outbreaks is thought to be 93 percent to 95 percent. The New York Health Department compiles data about vaccinations for students from kindergarten through 12th grade from about 5,400 schools. The numbers below are for the 2017-18 school year. Across the state, about 95 percent of students are completely immunized.

SCHOOLS		# students	% medical	% religious	Polio	Measles	Mumps	Rubella	Diphtheria	Hep B	Varicella	Complete
Beacon	Glenham Elementary	419	0	0.26	99.5	99.2	99.2	99.2	99.7	99.5	99	98.7
	Sargent Elementary	327	0.65	0.65	98.4	96.4	96.4	98.4	98.4	98.4	95.8	95.8
	JV Forrestal Elementary	281	0	1.93	97.3	96.5	96.5	96.5	97.3	97.7	95	95
	South Avenue Elementary	359	0	2.97	95.3	95.5	95.5	95.8	94.4	96.1	95.5	92.3
	Rombout Middle School	659	0	0.91	99.1	99.1	99.1	99.1	99.4	99.1	98.9	95
	Beacon High School	891	0.11	0.8	99.3	99.5	99.5	99.5	99.4	99.5	99.3	98.4
	New Covenant Learning Center*	30	0	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Hudson Hills Academy*	17	0	10	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Philipstown	Garrison School (K-8)	212	0	6.07	93	93.5	93.5	93.5	93.5	92.5	93	92.1
	Haldane Elementary	331	0.28	3.09	96.9	96.9	96.9	96.9	96.3	96.3	96.9	94.7
	Haldane Middle/High	506	0.2	2.66	97.5	97.5	96.9	97.5	96.9	97.3	96.9	95.5
	Manitou School*	64	0	9.52	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5

*private schools

Source: health.data.ny.gov

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Friday, March 1, 7 p.m.
Eric Sommer - Free

Friday, March 1, 8:30 p.m.
Teada from Ireland

Saturday, March 2, 1 p.m.
Beacon Rising Women's Choir
Key of Q

Saturday, March 2, 6 p.m.
Richard Baratta & Friends - Free

Saturday, March 2, 8:30 p.m.
Stephane Wrembel
Sara Labriola

Sunday, March 3, 11:30 a.m.
East Coast Jazz - Free

Sunday, March 3, 7 p.m.
Susan Werner

Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m.
Film Night: "Lost and Gone Forever" - Free

Friday, March 8, 7 p.m.
Adam Falcon - Free

Friday, March 8, 8:30 p.m.
CJ Chenier & the Red Hot Louisiana Band

Saturday, March 9, 6 p.m.
Annie Mash Duo - Free

Saturday, March 9, 8:30 p.m.
Tom Chapin Birthday Celebration

Sunday, March 10, 11:30 a.m.
James Bacon - Free

Sunday, March 10, 7 p.m.
Songwriters Showcase - Free
Carla Springer, Steve Kirkman, Amy Laber

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Constituent Services

To get a better idea of what the position of director of constituent services requires, *The Current* filed a Freedom of Information Law request for copies of Nicholas DePerno Jr.'s emails and phone message forms during 2017.

The county law office said the documents it provided represented DePerno's entire correspondence with constituents for the year. If accurate, it shows he handled an average of about two cases per month, most of which were resolved with a phone call or by forwarding the email to a county department. Below are examples.

Jan. 18: DePerno spoke with a woman who was concerned because her daughter, who has two children, was dropped from a state Department of Family Services program. DePerno forwarded her email to the county Department of Social Services.

Feb. 16: DePerno returned a call to the county executive's office from a Brewster resident who had called 911 about a toddler in respiratory arrest and was told by responding firefighters that they had trouble finding the address on GPS. DePerno referred the resident to the Bureau of Emergency Services.

March 1: A resident reported that the roadway was washed out on Oscawana Lake Road at Twilight Lane. DePerno alerted the Highway Department.... A resident emailed to say that Stoneleigh Avenue is “one of the filthiest roads in Putnam County. It is strewn with litter; now even a toilet sits alongside the road, which about sums it up.” DePerno emailed the Highway Department asking someone to pick up the toilet.

April 25: A caller in Brewster complained about a neighbor who was piling sticks and tree debris along the property line. DePerno suggested calling the village.

May 2: A caller from Southeast complained that a neighbor was placing garbage outside in Trader Joe's bags, which break. DePerno referred the person to the Southeast building department.

May 15: On a “complaint report” form, DePerno noted that a resident had called because his neighbor has a septic problem that causes gray water to leak into Mahopac Lake. DePerno spoke with the Board of Health, which noted two dye tests had been done with negative results.

May 30: A caller said her daughter was being harassed by her boyfriend. DePerno referred her to the district attorney.

June 1: A caller who had applied for county paratransit services said they asked for her Social Security number and diagnosis. She said her doctor told her that violated federal law.

June 15: DePerno forwarded a complaint to the Putnam County Golf Course from a woman who said its leaf blowers were starting at 5:30 a.m.

June 27: DePerno sent copies of receipts and other information about herbicides that had been sprayed near the Cold Spring water supply to Greg Phillips, the village water superintendent, who had requested them. Phillips replied: “Not

[illegible]

Above is an example of a complaint form that DePerno completes when a constituent calls the county executive's office. The names and identifying details were obscured by the county legal department.

happy. Nor will my community be.” On July 11, Phillips emailed again, saying he was still waiting for information on dosages and the identity of the contractor. “You may not agree, but this doesn’t appear to have any priority attached to it, from our perspective,” Phillips wrote.

July 7: A caller reported having trouble with NYSEG, with electricity going in and out. DePerno returned call and left a message.

July 30: DePerno emailed County Historian Sarah Johnson after a resident asked that a marker for Solomon Hopkins on Route 301 be repainted.

Aug. 16: A resident wrote to complain that an official at the golf course had yelled at two senior citizens who were playing too slowly. DePerno forwarded the email to the course manager, who reported back that the pair had been told to start on Tee 10 but insisted on starting at Tee 1. "My staff tolerates a lot of verbal assaults on a daily basis when they are just trying to do their jobs," wrote the club pro.

Sept. 6: DePerno wrote to the code enforcement officer in Kent to inform him that the county did not own a property where a tree was leaning toward a person's home.

Oct. 10: A retired plumber in Putnam Valley complained that he had been fined \$1,250 for not having a license but says he was threatened with bodily harm if he did not plead guilty. DePerno advised the caller to appeal to the Plumbing Board.

Nov. 16: A former Tilly's Table summer worker said he or she was not paid for eight hours of work at \$15 an hour. "If I'm not paid I'm going to news, newspaper and court," the individual wrote. DePerno called the restaurant manager, who sent a check for \$120.

Dec. 4: A caller said a homeless woman was living on the bike path behind the Stop & Shop. DePerno referred the case to the Department of Social Services.... A caller said a firm in Mahopac never showed up to supply heating oil. DePerno called the firm, which said it would make the delivery the next day.

Odell *(from Page 1)*

The questions included whether Odell had received threats or had other reasons to fear for her personal safety during her eight years in the position, whether she considered using Putnam County sheriff's deputies for security instead, as other county executives do, and how regularly DePerno drives her to and from appointments or events. DePerno also did not respond to questions posed by email asking him about his job duties or to a follow-up phone message.

Dini LoBue, who was a county legislator when DePerno was hired in November 2011, said Odell told legislators at the time that she was changing jobs around in her office and needed to cut the salaries of her secretary by 80 percent and her chief of staff by 30 percent to fund a new \$44,000-per-year driver-bodyguard-constituent services position. Three months later, the Legislature restored the salary cuts and by the end of the year also had approved the hiring of a deputy county executive at \$114,812 annually.

In October 2013, LoBue introduced a motion to eliminate funding for the director of constituent services, arguing that a staff member who drove the county executive to public functions was an unnecessary expense. Other legislators defended the position, saying that Odell needed security because she is a woman and attended functions at night. LoBue's motion failed, 8-1. A motion by Legislators Anthony DiCarlo and Sam Oliverio to allow for more discussion of the job also failed, 5-4.

“She created this pseudo-position for Nick DePerno,” said LoBue, who spent much of her eight years in the Legislature at odds with Odell, in an interview. “He accompanies her everywhere. It’s just a joke. I don’t know what the rationale was.”

Oliverio, who sat on the Personnel Committee and who challenged Odell for county executive in 2014, said he “used to argue about it all the time: Couldn’t the money be used elsewhere?” He said Odell’s three predecessors never had a bodyguard or driver. “Odell said she needed one, though,” he said.

Besides DePerno, Odell's staff also includes a chief of staff and a secretary. The deputy county executive position has

~ * ~

DIRECTOR OF CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The incumbent of this position acts as Confidential Aide to the County Executive. Duties also include responding to constituent communications, researching complaints/concerns, including investigation and resolution of constituent/client complaints and disputes regarding County departments and services. Transports and provides personal security for the County Executive.

Minimum qualifications: Graduation from High School or possession of a comparable diploma and at least ten (10) years of police investigation work that involved significant, daily public contact and interaction.

Salary: \$44,500

Send application/resume to:
Jan Miller, Putnam County Personnel Department
110 Old Route 6, Building #3
Carmel, NY 10512.

The ad for DePerno's job that appears on the Putnam County website

been vacant since Bruce Walker departed in 2017 for a job with the U.S. Department of Energy.

Because Odell has not hired a new deputy, “if she just keeps the driver, nobody can complain,” said Oliverio, who is the Putnam Valley supervisor. “But if she creates the deputy county executive position again,” it would raise questions about spending. “She can’t have both.”

Early in her campaign in 2018 to unseat Odell, Maureen Fleming, the Kent supervisor, dismissed DePerno's job as unnecessary. "Odell has expanded county government by creating additional, controversial positions, including communications staff on a temporary pay line and a director of constituent services whose job description includes 'personal security' for Odell," she said in a statement in June.

Getting a waiver

According to state law, for a waiver to be issued or renewed to a retiree, the employer must demonstrate that it undertook “extensive recruitment efforts” to find other, qualified applicants.

Finding qualified applicants became more challenging for the country when, after hiring DePerno, Odell changed the requirements of the job.

While the initial posting in 2011 said the qualifications for the position, whose duties include responding to constituent complaints and concerns (see story at left), would be left to the county executive's discretion, the current listing requires applicants to have "at least 10 years of police investigation work that involved significant, daily public contact."

Although the state waivers are designed to be temporary, giving the employer two years to find applicants who don't require a waiver, DePerno has received four. His most recent expires Dec. 31.

Under a state law passed in 2008, to obtain and renew a waiver, an employer must show either that “there is an urgent need” to hire a retiree because of “an unplanned, unpredictable and unexpected vacancy,” or that “extensive recruitment efforts did not find any available qualified non-retired persons.”

Asked about how it recruits applicants for DePerno's job, Eldridge wrote in an email that its plan "is very simple. We advertise and have advertised for the director of constituent services on a continuous recruitment basis since 2016 on our department website. If you were to look at our Personnel Department website today, you would see the ad for this position prominently displayed on the opening page. Our department website is accessed more often and receives more traffic/visits than any other county department website. Our website has proved to be, far and away, the best method to advertise county job openings."

The county also has placed public notices in its official newspapers, such as the *Putnam County News & Recorder*.

The job has been posted as available

(Continued on Page 8)

Odell *(from Page 7)*

for more than seven years, since Jan. 1, 2012, when DePerno's first waiver became effective.

Eldridge declined to provide details about what DePerno does. "Providing details related to the travel and security arrangements for the county executive would be inappropriate at any time, but certainly so, in this day and age," he wrote. He said DePerno drives a county-owned car "to accomplish the duties of his position but does not have a car assigned to him when not on duty."

DePerno appears to be the only public employee in Putnam or Dutchess counties who has an active waiver, according to data compiled by the Empire Center, an Albany-based think tank. The waivers are more typically provided for retired law-enforcement investigators who have specialties that are in short supply. For example, Lourdes Gonzalez obtained waivers in 2014 and 2016 to continue working as a \$60,000-per-year Spanish-speaking investigator for the Special Victims Unit for the Putnam County district attorney.

The law does not apply when a retiree receiving a pension is elected to a position. That's why Carl Frisenda, the Philipstown highway superintendent, who receives a \$55,623 annual pension after spending 34 years with the Putnam County Highway Department, did not need one when he

was elected to his \$90,000 job in 2015.

Waivers also are not required once a retiree reaches age 65. That's what happened with Anthony Scannapieco Jr., the Republican board of elections commissioner in Putnam County, who received eight waivers over 15 years. The county Legislature argued that state election law allows political bodies — in this case, the Republican Party in Putnam — to choose its commissioners without advertising the job.

When Scannapieco turned 65 in 2014, he no longer needed a waiver. Today, at 69, he earns \$91,444 annually from the county as well as a \$75,391 pension from the Yonkers Fire Department, from which he retired in 1999 at age 50. Public pensions are not subject to state income tax.

Security detail

If DePerno is uniquely qualified for the position of director of constituent services, the job's duties also appear to be unusual. The elected managers of counties that are of similar size to Putnam such as Tompkins (population 105,000) and Steuben (97,000) say they do not provide bodyguards or drivers for their executives.

In Dutchess County, which has a population of 295,000, a representative for County Executive Marc Molinaro (who last year ran for governor) says he does not have a bodyguard and that "every person who works in the office provides constituent services." In Orange County (373,000),

Face of the County

Based on the emails and complaint forms provided by the county, Nicholas DePerno Jr.'s relatively infrequent dealings with the public as director of constituent services were professional and polite. However, a number of postings to his public Facebook account do not share that tone, including derogatory comments about Democratic leaders (on Nancy Pelosi: "God, I hate this bitch! What a fucktar") and repostings of anti-Muslim slurs ("Pork Fact #16: People who eat pork are less likely to blow themselves up"; "Islam is Love. Yeah, if you're a goat").

a representative for Steven Neuhaus said he does not have security "and has never considered it." In Westchester County (949,000), a representative for George Latimer says he does not have a staff member who acts as a driver or bodyguard.

According to the New York State Association of Counties, there are eight female county executives or managers besides Odell. Two who immediately responded to an email from *The Current*, in Franklin (51,795) and Delaware (47,276) counties, both said they do not have a bodyguard or driver.

Point Man

Nicholas DePerno Jr., the director of constituent services for Putnam County, has been in the news in the past. In a lawsuit filed in 2013, RDC Golf Group, which had a contract to run Putnam County Golf Course from 2008 to 2012 and said it had been shortchanged \$212,000, alleged that Odell and her then-deputy, Bruce Walker, asked the firm in 2012 to hire DePerno for a \$25-per-hour "no-show" job as an "observer" at the club.

RDC said in the lawsuit that it hired DePerno, who visited a few times "but performed no function whatsoever." According to the firm, DePerno notified RDC later in the summer that he could not work for the club any longer because "it could give a bad political appearance." He never cashed his paychecks, RDC said.

Odell denied that her administration had pressured RDC to hire DePerno, saying she had sent DePerno only to gather information on the club's operations, and that he found what he needed within a few weeks.

The lawsuit and a countersuit by Putnam County were settled in 2014 when RDC agreed to pay the county \$10,000 as part of a mutual non-disparagement agreement that the Legislature approved, 6-2.

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the public

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Cold Spring, NY 10516
magazzino.art

The Calendar

By Women, for Everyone

Howland to host evening of works by female composers

By Alison Rooney

When Debra Kaye, a pianist and aspiring writer of music, came from Atlanta to New York City to study at the Mannes School, “there weren’t any female composers to model myself after,” she recalls.

Much has changed in the intervening decades. To honor Women’s History Month, the Howland Cultural Center on Saturday, March 9, will host a concert, *Reclaim the Night*, featuring works by female composers (including Kaye, who has lived in Beacon since 2006). Kaye will also perform, along with violinists Mioi Takeda and Lynn Bechtold (as Miolina) and soprano Kelly Ellenwood.

The concert’s title is from a song by Peggy Seeger, the daughter of Ruth Crawford Seeger and half-sister of Pete Seeger. Besides Kaye, the show will include compositions by Bechtold, Valerie Coleman, Emma Logan, Jessica Meyer, Elena Ruehr and Pauchi Sasaki.

Kaye’s catalogue of nearly 50 pieces includes chamber and orchestral music, art songs, choral and theatrical compositions. She has been recognized by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers

for her “creative contributions to American music,” and her works have been performed at Carnegie Hall and around the country.

During the 2017-18 season Kaye wrote a string quartet commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Howland Chamber Music Circle, and in 2016 she was commissioned by BeaconArts to set Margaret Fuller’s “Freedom and Truth” to music for the dedication of a marker for the poet at Polhill Park.

Kaye says it’s “a great time for American composers and American music. Funding is hard, the pot is smaller, but there are a lot of passionate people doing it.”

The first first female composer she met was a friend of her family. “She alerted me that it was possible, and once that happened, it became a joyful journey for me,” Kaye recalls. “I no longer felt chained to the piano.”

She began to experiment. “I wrote a lot of things that were semi-improvised and written for me to perform with others,”

she says. “I worked with my friends; sometimes there were conga players, with me on synth. I composed a piece inspired by a series of 64 small paintings someone had done. I’d love to hear it again now, but in the spirit of those times, it was recorded only on a cassette, long gone.”

After briefly moving to the Pacific Northwest, Kaye returned to New York City more mature, invigorated and focused on composing. “I started learning more by listening to others play my work,” she says. As she became more experienced, Kaye felt more at ease writing for ensembles.

Asked to describe her process, Kaye responds: “Sometimes a whole swath of music comes into my head. Then I step back and take the needed time to gain perspective on that, and then I refine it. I sometimes alter it again after hearing it live for the first time, with the real instruments being played. Something internal is now a shared experience. That can be both exciting and scary.

“Most of the time the changes are about the subtleties, the little markings,” she says. “For example, in a string quartet which I wrote, when I heard the musicians perform the piece, they didn’t go all-out, and I realized I needed to write *andante appassionata* [moderately slow tempo, with passion]. The more specific, the better, especially with dynamics.” Kaye often works on two pieces at once; if she reaches a standstill with one, she can turn to the other.

Tickets to Reclaim the Night are \$15 at brownpapertickets.com/event/4056486 or \$20 at the door. The Howland Cultural Center is located at 477 Main St.



Debra Kaye

Photo by Ronnie Farley

The Water Took Her Back

A wilderness trip brought healing for writer

By Alison Rooney

Irene O’Garden had the makings of a memoir stored in a drawer. It involved her siblings, including two alcoholics, a genius with no social skills and one with crippling anxiety.

How did it all add up? The problem was, she found, it didn’t add up.

She procrastinated. But after returning physically and emotionally exhausted from a wilderness trip in the West during which nature wreaked havoc, she began her usual therapy of writing down her thoughts.

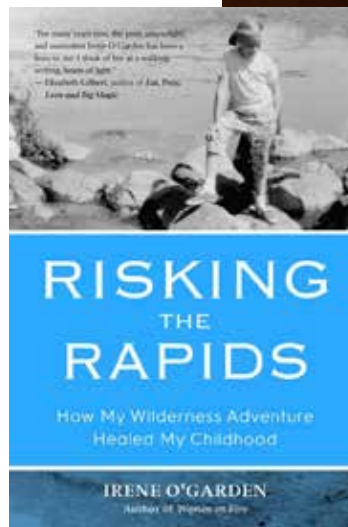
Several months later, the Garrison resident realized that the two stories — the trip, and her siblings — were ripe for combining.

“The core of the book is my upbringing,” she says. “But what makes the book is the wilderness.” O’Garden felt that by intertwining the two accounts, she could finally access the family story that lies beneath both.

As a result, her narrative alternates between the repressed mid-century Midwest to unusual conditions on present-day Montana whitewater rapids. She will read from the book, *Risking the Rapids: How My Wilderness Adventure Healed My Childhood*, at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 8, at Split Rock Books in Cold Spring.

O’Garden took the trip, at age 62, after the unexpected death of one of her older brothers. At the memorial service, another brother suggested doing something in the wilderness together. “He’s gone on trips for 45 years into the back country,” O’Garden says. “I knew there was a part of him I’d never know without doing this.”

Although O’Garden says she lacks the “roughing it” gene, she and other siblings and their children “decided it would be a wonderfully bonding



Irene O’Garden

Photo by A. Rooney

(Continued on Page 13)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

SAT 9

Parade of Green

BEACON

Noon. | facebook.com/paradeofgreen

Fred Antalek, a lifelong Beacon resident, business owner and former city councilman will be the grand marshal for this annual parade down Main Street, now in its fourth year.

SAT 9

Outlaw Pinewood Derby

COLD SPRING

8 p.m. St. Mary's Church | 1 Chestnut St.

This fundraiser for the Philipstown Cub Scouts will be open to adults. Derby cars must meet safety and physical requirements; a kit will be provided. Email quinn@quinnchandler.com. *Cost: \$20*

SUN 10

Hudson Valley Renegades Job Fair

WAPPINGERS FALLS

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
1500 Route 9D | hvrenegades.com

The minor-league baseball team will be accepting applications for concessions, stadium operations, ushers, merchandise sales, parking and other positions for its 26th season, which begins June 16. The team is also still accepting applications for internships by college students in its graphics and food & beverage departments. Email intern@hvrenegades.com.

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 2

Infant CPR Class

GARRISON

11 a.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org

Babies and siblings are welcome at this 90-minute, non-accrediting class. Email beautifulmamas123@gmail.com to register. *Cost: \$10*

SAT 2

School Invitational Theme Exhibition

GARRISON

3 – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org

This annual show highlights artwork created by students from 30 schools in Putnam, Dutchess, Westchester, Orange and Rockland counties (including Garrison, Haldane Elementary, Manitou School, and Beacon schools). This year's theme is "Hello Dali! Greetings from the World of Surrealism." Works by high school students who teamed with mentors will also be shown. Through March 10.



Parade of Green, March 2

THURS 7

Creative Writing for Teens

BEACON

3:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

Julie Chibbaro, who has written several young adult novels, will use writing exercises, reading aloud, journaling and music to help teens build characters and worlds. Registration required. *Free*

SAT 9

Middle School Night

GARRISON

5 – 9:30 p.m.
Philipstown Recreation Center
107 Glenclyffe Drive | 845-424-4618
philipstownrecreation.com

Register for one of three 90-minute sessions, at 5 p.m., 6:30 p.m. or 8 p.m., for escape room, laser tag or karaoke. *Cost: \$5*

SUN 10

Simone Dinnerstein

BEACON

Noon. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-765-3012
howlandmusic.org

The pianist will perform a concert for children called *Tic Toc Choc*. *Cost: \$10 (children free)*



VISUAL ARTS

SAT 2

Still, Still Moving

BEACON

2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4614
howlandculturalcenter.org

More than 30 artists will be represented in this show curated by Eleni Smolen to celebrate Women's History Month. It will remain on view until March 31.

She uses acrylic and water paints for works inspired by the Hudson Valley and her native Beacon.

SAT 9

Contemporary Landscape Art

BEACON

4 – 7 p.m. Bannerman Island Gallery
150 Main St. | 845-831-6346
bannermancastle.org

The exhibit includes paintings of the Hudson River Valley by Daniela Cooney, Tarryl Gabel, Laura Garramone, Judith Hranjottis and Susan Miiller. Through May 26.

SAT 9

The Mystery of Nancy Drew

BEACON

5 – 7 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

For their fifth annual show at the library, artists from the women's collective CoMFY will share artwork inspired by the Nancy Drew book series for young adults.

SAT 9

Veracity, Grace and Seduction

BEACON

6 – 9 p.m. bau Gallery | 506 Main St.
845-440-7584 | baugallery.com

The main exhibit will feature works by Eileen Sackman, Joan Phares and Pamela Zarembo, while Carol Flaitz will present a show called *Fractured* in the Beacon Room. Through April 7.

SAT 9

Reality Sandwich

BEACON

6 – 9 p.m. Hudson Beach Glass
162 Main St. | 845-440-0068
hudsonbeachglass.com

Curated by Carl Van Brunt, gallery director of the Woodstock Artists Association & Museum, this show will include paintings, mixed media, photographs and sculpture by Colin

Barclay, Donald Bruschi, Richard Butler, Beth Humphrey, Stephen Nicolls, Thomas Sarrantonio, Robert Toyokazu Troxell and j.d. weiss.

SAT 9

Glow Show / Cat Atomic / Fluke

BEACON

6 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery
163 Main St. | 212-255-2505
shop.cluttermagazine.com/gallery

SAT 9

On the 1s and 2s

BEACON

6 – 9 p.m. Catalyst Gallery
137 Main St. | 845-204-3844
catalystgallery.com

The show features black-and-white photos by JP Pacquing of "DJs spinning records and cool kids dancing."



STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 2

The Importance of Being Earnest

GARRISON

7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3900
philipstowndepottheatre.org

Carin Jean White directs the farcical Oscar Wilde play. Also SUN 3, FRI 8, SAT 9, SUN 10. *Cost: \$25 (\$20 seniors/students)*

SAT 2

Vassar Repertory Dance Theatre Gala

POUGHKEEPSIE

8 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

The 37th annual gala features students performing jazz, ballet and modern dance works choreographed with faculty. Also SUN 3. *Cost: \$11 (\$9 students)*



Susan Miiller

SAT 2

Yankee Tavern**WAPPINGERS FALLS**

8 p.m. County Players Theater
2681 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491
countyplayers.org

A reading of Steven Dietz's play about conspiracy theories and how one person's truth is another's fiction. Also SUN 3. *Cost: \$10*

SUN 3

The Illusionists**WEST POINT**

3 p.m. Eisenhower Hall Theatre
Pitcher Road | 845-938-4159
ikehall.com

This traveling Broadway show features five magicians performing dazzling tricks. *Cost: \$45*

THURS 7

Lost and Gone Forever**BEACON**

7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

This 2009 film by Keaton Weiss chronicles a tumultuous week in the life of a lonely waitress in upstate New York during the summer before the 2008 recession. *Free*

SAT 9

First Look**POUGHKEEPSIE**

7 p.m. Spackenkill High School
12 Spackenkill Road
beaconplayers.com

An evening of sneak peeks of upcoming performances by the Beacon Players, Beacon Performing Arts Center, Westside Theatricals and other student troupes. *Free*

SAT 9

Newburgh: Beauty and Tragedy**BEACON**

7 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
50 Liberty St.
moviesthatmatterbeacon.org

This documentary by Dmitri Kasterine reveals the lives of residents of downtown Newburgh. Kasterine, who started photographing people he met in the city 22 years ago, will join a discussion following the film. *Free*

TALKS & TOURS

SUN 3

Answers to Questions About Climate Change**GARRISON**

2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org

The C-Change Conversations Primer is designed to explore scientific research that will help explain climate change. *Free*

TUES 5

Instagram: How to Form a Pod**BEACON**

6 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

Join artist Anna West as she explains how to form a pod on Instagram to promote



yourself and others. Participants will learn how to use the app, repost and get notifications. *Free*

FRI 8

Irene O'Garden: Risking the Rapids**COLD SPRING**

6 p.m. Split Rock Books
97 Main St. | 845-265-2080
splitrockbks.com

In her memoir, O'Garden recounts her coming of age in a dysfunctional Catholic family with six siblings paralleled by a journey into the wilderness. See Page 9.

FRI 8

Sex 2.0 for Parents**COLD SPRING**

6:30 p.m. Old VFW Hall
34 Kemble Ave. | gufspta.org

Sexuality educator Rachel Lotus will lead a discussion on how to talk to children about their bodies, boundaries, gender, consent and identity. *Cost: \$10 (\$15 door)*

SAT 9

Seed-Sowing Workshop**COLD SPRING**

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Stonecrop
81 Stonecrop Lane | 845-265-2000
stonecrop.org

Learn the basics of seed propagation and techniques to grow annuals from seed. Part 2 will be April 13. *Cost: \$80 (\$60 members)*

SAT 9

Lauren Willig: The English Wife**COLD SPRING**

6 p.m. Split Rock Books | 97 Main St.
845-265-2080 | splitrockbks.com

This reception marks the paperback release of Willig's novel, which is set in the Gilded Age on the banks of the Hudson when a husband is murdered and a wife goes missing. *Free*

SUN 10

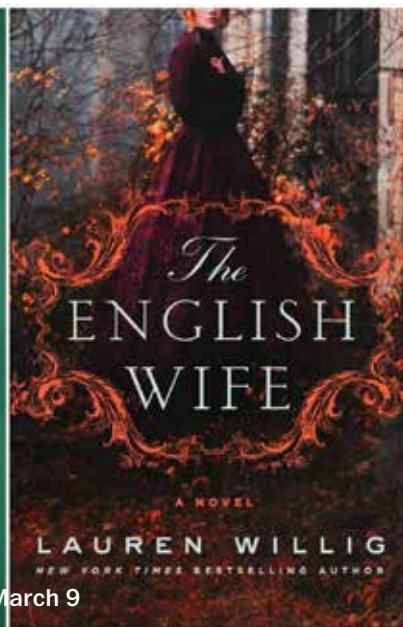
Beginner Winter Tree ID**BEAR MOUNTAIN**

10 a.m. Bear Mountain State Park
trailsidezoo.org

Meet in front of the Bear Mountain Inn for a two-hour ramble to learn how to distinguish trees without their leaves. Parking is \$10. *Free*



Lauren Willig: The English Wife, March 9



The English Wife, March 9



C.J. Chenier, March 8

MUSIC

SAT 2

Beacon Rising Women's Choir and Key of Q**BEACON**

1 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Gina Samardge, who leads the women's choir, says its repertoire is a fusion of resistance and triumph. It will be accompanied by Key of Q, a 30-member group of LGBTQ and allied singers. The concert will raise funds for the Article 20 Network, a nonprofit that defends the right to freedom of assembly. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 door)*

SAT 2

Blame It on the Bossa Nova: A Brazilian Cabaret!**BEACON**

7:30 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org

The Judith Tulloch Band will perform bossa nova songs, a mixture of samba and jazz popularized in Brazil in the 1950s and 1960s. The phrase means "new trend" or "new wave." *Cost: \$10 (\$15 door)*

SAT 2

Stephane Wrembel**BEACON**

8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Wrembel's new album, *The Django Experiment IV*, is a tribute to gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt. Garrison native Sara Labriola will open. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

FRI 8

C.J. Chenier & The Red Hot Louisiana Band**BEACON**

8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Celebrate Mardi Gras with Chenier, who has performed with Paul Simon, Joe Sample & Ray Parker Jr., The Gin Blossoms, John Mayall and his Grammy-winning father, Clifton "The King of Zydeco" Chenier. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SAT 9

Mike Shaw Benefit**BEACON**

5 – 11:30 p.m. St. Rocco's Society
15 S. Chestnut St. | bit.ly/shaw-benefit
The concert of hardcore bands

(All Out War, Death Threat, Regulate, Ekulu, Soul Blind and Age of Apocalypse) will raise money for musician Mike Shaw, who was seriously injured in a car crash and is unable to work. See Page 13. *Cost: \$20*

SAT 9

Fat Boi's Brass Band**BEACON**

7 p.m. Denning's Point Distillery
10 N. Chestnut St.

This seven-piece, New Orleans-style street band brings Mardi Gras wherever it goes. *Cost: \$10 donation*

SAT 9

Reclaim the Night**BEACON**

7:30 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-765-3012
howlandculturalcenter.org

The concert, which honors Women's History Month, will include performances by Mioi Takeda, Lynn Bechtold, Debra Kaye and Kelly Ellenwood of music by female composers. See Page 9. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 door)*

(Continued on Page 12)



Life Casting Masterclass, March 9





Mike Shaw of Mindforce



Mindforce vocalist Jay Peta gets airborne.

Photos by Nicole Settembrino

A Hardcore 'No-Brainer'

Show in Beacon to benefit injured guitarist

By Jeff Simms

The punk and hardcore music scene in the Highlands is coming together next weekend to help out one of its own.

Things were going better than ever for Mindforce, a band whose members live in Poughkeepsie and Beacon that had just released its first full-length album, *Excalibur*, on a Boston label, Triple B Records. The band also performed last year at festivals in Richmond, Philadelphia, Boston and Florida.

Then, in January, a van driven by the band's guitarist, Mike Shaw, was hit head-on by a vehicle trying to pass another car on Route 9 between Cold Spring and Garrison.

Shaw, 39, who lives in Hopewell Junction with his wife and 2-year-old daughter, suffered fractures to his left leg, broken ribs and other serious injuries. He went through two surgeries to the leg within a week and will be out of work for months while he recovers. Mindforce is on hiatus.

Within days of the accident, Alex Casey, a Beacon resident who is a fan and friend of the band, launched a campaign at go-fundme.com/help-mike-shaw-recovery to

raise money for the family. So far nearly \$23,000 has been pledged.

When friends also began discussing a benefit show, the phone calls rolled in. Half a dozen hardcore bands (punk rock's slightly louder, faster cousin) from around New York and the Northeast volunteered to play.

"They reached out before we even had a date," said Casey, who secured the St. Rocco Society at 26 S. Chestnut St. for Saturday, March 9. The first of six bands will begin playing at 5 p.m.

The headliner is All Out War, a "metalcore" band from Newburgh that was active in the 1990s and reunited in 2006. The show also will feature Death Threat, Regulate, Ekulu, Soul Blind and Age of Apocalypse. Most of the bands have shared a stage with Mindforce or its members' earlier bands, Casey said.

Tickets are \$20 at bit.ly/shaw-benefit, with all proceeds going to the Shaw family.

"The Hudson Valley hardcore community is a relatively small scene," Casey said. "But over the years we've maintained a solid group of regulars and Mike Shaw has always been involved to some extent. Setting up a benefit to help him and his family in their time of need was a no-brainer, and the support we've gotten has been tremendous."

O'Garden (from Page 9)

thing to do, seeking closure on a journey through the remotest spot in the lower 48."

To set the scene for both narrative threads, O'Garden describes her place in her family and her family's place in the cosmos of mid-20th century America.

"I was born in the middle," she says. "Middle of the century, middle of the country [Minneapolis], middle child of seven. Neither urban nor suburban. Middle to upper middle class. My parents were very Catholic. Dad was a TV personality, well-known in the Twin Cities and throughout much of Minnesota; a man people trusted. The boys had a tough relationship with my father. My mom shouldn't have had kids. She was aloof."

Much like the country in the 1950s and 1960s, the family fractured, pitting traditional family life against youthful rebellion.

Decades later, on the river in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, conditions become more and more fraught. "The nadir was one awful day when the campsite we intended to stay in was full," O'Garden recalls. "My sister and I shared a tent. A bigger storm reverberated, shaking everything. Did we fear for our lives? Close. Nothing could be done. We found out later that the storm had ignited many wildfires. It's the hardest thing seeing people you know at risk and not being able to do anything about it."

Three or four months after returning

from Montana, O'Garden knew she had to write about the experience "in order to stop carrying it around." Later she remembered "that thing I had in my drawer."

After completing a draft, O'Garden shared it with siblings. "It was important for me to speak what I perceived as the truth, because I didn't want to alienate anyone," she says. "They said: 'Write what you have to.'"

"Writing is hard," O'Garden continues, "but the good thing about it is that once you put it together in the way you want to, it stays together. The things we have crafted out of our heads, in meticulous ways, can last so long."



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ARTS BRIEFS

Congressional Art Contest Opens

Deadline is April 19

Submissions are being accepted until April 19 for the 2019 Congressional Art Competition for high school students.

A panel of judges will select the work of one student from District 18, which includes Beacon and Philipstown.

Submissions must be framed and accompanied by a release form (see bit.ly/congress-art-contest). They should be mailed to or dropped off at the district office of Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney at 123 Grand St., Newburgh, NY 12550.



Theresa Bailey's winning entry in the 2018 Congressional Art Competition for District 18



The New MUSE4tet performed for Haldane students on Feb. 15. From left: Alex Waterman, Gwen Laster, Hsinwei Chiang and Melanie Dyer

Photo provided

Arts Alliance Gives First Grant

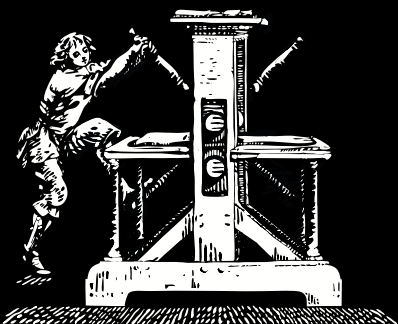
Haldane group now registered as nonprofit

The Haldane Arts Alliance, which this year replaced the Haldane Arts Booster Club, awarded its first grant in February, contributing to the costs of bringing violin-

ist and composer Gwen Laster and her New MUSE4tet to Haldane Elementary School on Feb. 15 for a Black History Month assembly.

As a nonprofit, the Arts Alliance can now accept tax-deductible donations and give more grants. Its mission is to support and promote performing, media, visual and literary arts in the school district. The group also launched a new website at haldanearts.org.

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Roots and Shoots

Ready, Set, Germinate

By Pamela Doan

If you're a gardener like me, here's what's going to happen in the next few weeks:



I'll get seeds ready and make the planting schedule. Then something happens. The schedule is off and it's too late to sow indoors. I'll adjust my plant choices to sow directly in the garden. Then something happens. Finally, the garden can always be saved by a visit to a nursery. If I'm very careful, the transplants will get into the garden before they die on the patio when I forget to water them.

The Hudson Highlands isn't guaranteed frost-free days until mid-May, but cold hardy vegetables that can withstand freezing temperatures can be sown by early April or sooner, depending on conditions. Once the daily soil temperatures hit 40 degrees, sow cabbage, onions, broccoli, fava beans and leafy green vegetables like lettuce, arugula, kale and spinach right into the garden. By the time heat-loving vegetables like tomatoes can be planted, you could already be enjoying fresh produce from your yard.

I find there are more choices using seeds and I can experiment more with varieties but it's time-consuming and time-sensitive. Transplants are easier on a busy schedule.

Seeds can be sown directly in the garden or started indoors. One advantage of starting seeds indoors is that there's still time for plans B and C — directly sowing outside or buying transplants if it doesn't meet expectations.

My house doesn't have a lot of southern exposure for optimal natural light and I have cats and a young child; all of them like playing in dirt. My seedlings need more protection and grow-lights, so for me that's another layer of work and attention to details.

Nevertheless, it's worth it. Discovering a seed has sprouted thrills me, even now, after years of gardening. What seems like a straightforward process — soil, water, sunlight — has a magical feeling when it works. For a seed to germinate, it needs exactly the right conditions. Some seeds are more tolerant and will give you a wider margin for error and others are more particular, like seeds that need stratifying, soaking or chilling before sowing.

Use a sterile growing medium rather than potting soil or garden soil. The seeds won't have to compete with weeds or any pathogens that may be lingering.

Here's what to look at in a seed packet besides the art:

Seeds are packaged to spark fantasies of gorgeous, flavorful produce. Before jumping into a relationship at the checkout counter, through, check the back. The fine print includes the growing instructions.

Not all lettuce is the same, for example. While it varies in leaf size, flavor and color, it also varies in days to harvest. This

is the total amount of time from seed to salad. Varieties in the Hudson Valley Seed catalog range from 28 to 65 days. Lettuce tends to flower and get ready to seed in hot weather, becoming too bitter to eat. While we can get heat waves before Memorial Day, June and July are riskier. Time lettuce planting to harvest before then and plant something else in its spot.

For best results, use your garden layout to rotate plantings by family. If that doesn't mean anything to you, just don't plant something in the same place as last year. The brassica family, for example, is cruciferous vegetables and includes Brussels sprouts, broccoli and cauliflower. Pests and diseases can live in the soil and will happily revive themselves if given the chance.

In commercial farming, plants are rotated for soil health, too. For example, tomatoes, corn and the brassicas all use a lot of nutrients from the soil and leave it more depleted. Beans and peas are soil builders and help replace nitrogen so that's a good example of a crop rotation. Root crops like carrots, potatoes, garlic and leeks are light feeders and require fewer resources.

A top layer of 2 to 3 inches of compost is sufficient for a new or established garden in terms of nutrients for a growing season.



'Tis the season for seed catalogs

Photo by P. Doan

Try to avoid digging more than necessary to get seeds or plants in the ground. Every time the soil is turned over, weed seeds are being brought to the surface and soil microbes are disrupted. The rototiller can be retired, for sure, and the garden has just lowered its carbon footprint in multiple ways while all the CO₂ is left in the ground.

Pamela Doan, a garden coach with One Nature, has grown ferns in Seattle, corn on a Brooklyn rooftop and is now trying to cultivate shitake mushrooms on logs. Email her at rootsandshoots@highlandscurrent.org.



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Bits of Beacon History

By Robert Murphy

Black History

The roots of Beacon's earliest black community run through a small strip of land between North Walnut and North Brett streets.

The parcel, measuring 50-by-130 feet, is the southern section of the Methodist Cemetery on North Walnut and for years was known as the Union Burial Ground, a cemetery paid for and owned by the African-American community in pre-Civil War Beacon (then called Fishkill Landing).

Our source for almost everything we know about the cemetery is the diary of James F. Brown, the gardener for the Verplanck estate at Mount Gulian and a former slave. According to his journal entries in September 1851, Brown went to the congregation of the AME Zion Church "to collect money to buy a burying ground for the colored people of Fishkill Landing and vicinity."

In early October, Brown paid \$65 to an agent for landowner John Peter DeWindt for the parcel that became the Colored Peoples Union Burying Ground. Brown and Samuel Sampson, Edward Bush, Christian Reynolds and Samuel Gomer were named



Looking south in the African-American Cemetery near North Walnut Street

BHS

trustees. On Oct. 31, the body of J. Henry Roose was the cemetery's first interment.

The five trustees all owned homes near the AME Zion Church and an annex of the Fishkill Landing public school created for black students. Reynolds was a teacher and the principal at the annex, which was founded in 1857 and operated until 1889.

In 1939 the Beacon City Council considered extending Oak Street through the cemetery to connect North Walnut and North Brett streets. A deed search by the city surveyor revealed that the property was still owned by the descendants of the five original trustees, not the city, and

could not be paved over — a close call for preserving Beacon's history.

Today the cemetery's most recognizable tombstones belong to a handful of black Civil War veterans. A thorough history of Beacon's black community has not been written, but when undertaken, it must begin in a cemetery.

Lafayette Avenue

Most city residents would guess (correctly) that Lafayette Avenue was named for the Marquis de Lafayette, the French ally of the colonists who is said to have visited the Madam Brett homestead during the American Revolution.

But the street's location reveals that the naming is more likely tied to Lafayette's return as the "nation's guest" for a grand tour of America in 1824 and 1825.

The general visited all 24 states, including New York, at the behest of President James Monroe. According to one account, in September 1824, while returning by steamer to New York City, Lafayette stopped at Fishkill Landing (Beacon) to visit the John Peter DeWindt home, which was located just south of present-day Lafayette Avenue until it burned down in 1862:

"At 7 o'clock the boat came to Fishkill Landing, and the General called on Mrs. Dewitt [Caroline], granddaughter of the former President Adams, where he was courteously as well as splendidly received, amidst a numerous collection of friends



Marquis de Lafayette in 1824 in a portrait by Ary Sheffer

assembled to greet their country's guest.

"To add to the enjoyments of this interview, the General had the pleasure of shaking cordially by the hand another of his brave Light Infantry, adding: 'The Light Infantry were a brave corps, and under my immediate command.' 'Yes,' returned the old soldier, 'and you gave us our swords and plumes.' The General made but a short stay, took leave of his friends, and returned to the boat under a salute of three hearty cheers."

A Lifesaver Made in Beacon

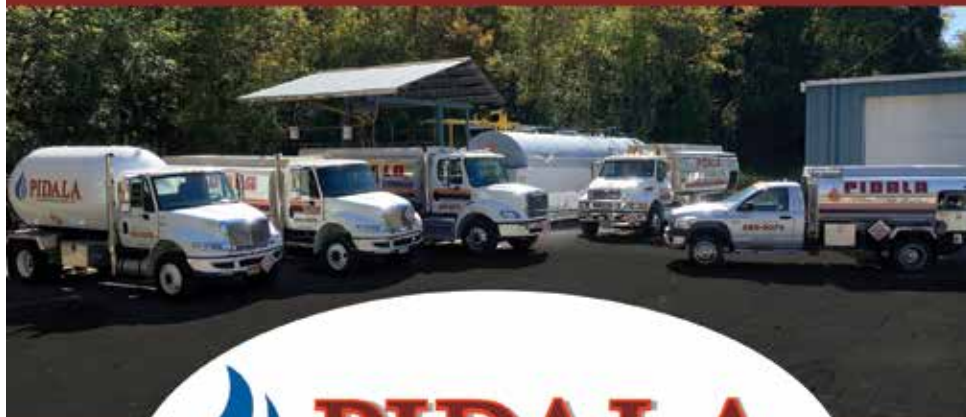
News coverage of the November death of the 41st president, George H.W. Bush, often included a video clip of his rescue after he was shot down during World War II.

The grainy movie footage, taken on Sept. 2, 1944, catches the 20-year-old naval aviator floating in a one-man rubber raft near the bow of a Navy submarine before being hauled aboard. Bush had been floating for four hours after parachuting from his burning Avenger, which had been hit by Japanese anti-aircraft fire. His parachute and the raft saved him.

There is a strong possibility the raft was made in Beacon. The New York Rubber Corp., which was one of the city's oldest fac-

(Continued on Page 17)

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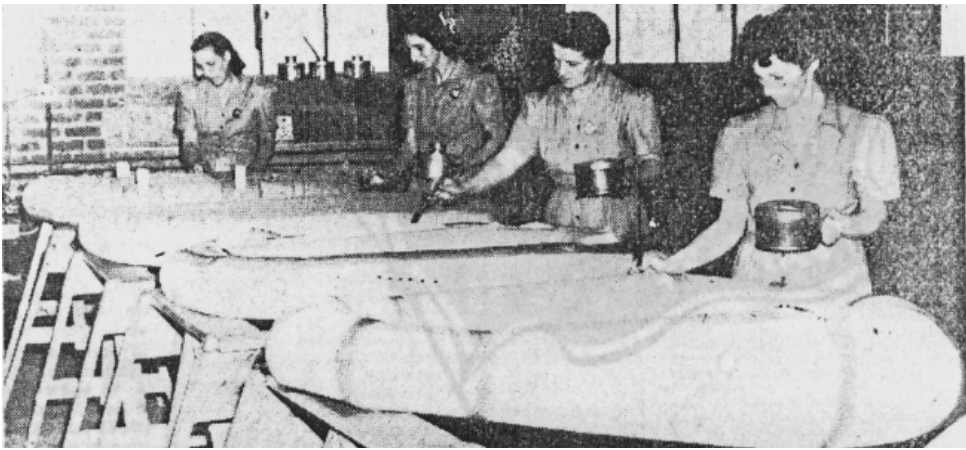
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Four women — Beatrice Williams, Helen Komornik, Abbie Conkling and Marie Pine — make rafts at the New York Rubber Corp. in Beacon in 1943. BHS

(Continued from Page 16)

tories (having been founded in 1851), made products of all sorts, from balls to belting. During World War II, it manufactured life vests, pontoons and life rafts for the Armed Services, including one-man rafts.

Other U.S. companies such as Goodyear, Firestone and Dayton also made the rafts. But in the early 1930s, New York Rubber was the first company to be awarded a government contract for Navy rafts after the firm secured a patent for a raft with individually sewn compartments inflated by a canister of carbon dioxide.

With its proven record for innovation and performance, New York Rubber in 1943 was awarded a coveted Army-Navy award for the outstanding production of war materials. During the war, the company's vice president, Herschel Harris,



George Bush, in the rubber raft, was rescued by a Navy submarine in 1944 after being shot down.

often demonstrated the one-man raft at community functions. Harris would take out a flat-packed raft with a CO₂ canister attached, pull the ripcord and throw the



Courtesy United States Rubber Company

ONE MAN PARACHUTE PACK TYPE

Did a one-man raft created by the United States Rubber Corp. in Beacon save President Bush? BHS

raft to the floor as it quickly inflated. Harris claimed that a raft thrown out of a cockpit would be inflated by the time it hit the water. Hundreds of Army and

Navy pilots were saved by this New York Rubber Corp. product.

(Continued on Page 18)

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Local newspaper ads from the early 20th century for Madame Zingarra's services

BHS

Beacon History (from Page 17)

Madame Zingarra, Palmist

For 50 cents she would read your palm, tell your fortune and allay your fears. She called herself Madame Zingarra and she read lifelines in Beacon, off and on, for more than 30 years.

A photo postcard of her storefront at 193 Main St., shared by Beacon Historical Society member Dave Turner, was taken about 1910, the year she rented office space in

Fishkill Landing. (The numbers on Main changed after 1932; today this building is BJ's Restaurant.) A few years earlier Madame Zingarra had roamed the country with her caravan, telling fortunes and bedazzling clients with her psychic powers. In 1900, a Texas newspaper reported:

"Madame Zingarra, the celebrated palmist and lifereader, advises you upon marriage, divorce, family matters and disagreements. She can see at a glance what you want and how to attain it.... Her rare

spiritual and physical gifts have made her the greatest living exponent of her weird and mysterious profession."

Zingarra came to Beacon, usually for the spring and summer, until about 1941, setting up shop in various Main Street storefronts.

After that, her fate remains a mystery.

Robert Murphy was president of the Beacon Historical Society for 20 years, from 1998 to 2018. These items were excerpted from his blog at beaconhistorical.org.

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The HIGHLANDS
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The HIGHLANDS

Current

7-Day Forecast for the Highlands

Saturday

40/27

Cloudy with a bit of snow and rain at times

POP: 55%

E 7-14 mph

RealFeel 40/24

Sunday

42/28

Considerable cloudiness

POP: 25%

W 4-8 mph

RealFeel 42/16

Monday

36/11

A bit of morning snow; otherwise, clouds breaking

POP: 60%

NNW 7-14 mph

RealFeel 33/8

Tuesday

29/12

Mostly sunny and cold

POP: 25%

WSW 4-8 mph

RealFeel 31/8

Wednesday

29/11

Cold with plenty of sunshine

POP: 20%

N 7-14 mph

RealFeel 22/2

Thursday

32/12

Partly sunny and cold

POP: 15%

WNW 6-12 mph

RealFeel 29/16

Friday

35/19

Mostly cloudy with snow or flurries possible

POP: 30%

S 3-6 mph

RealFeel 39/22

Snowfall

Past week1.0"

Month to date6.5"

Normal month to date8.1"

Season to date25.5"

Normal season to date26.9"

Last season to date32.9"

Record for 2/272.2" (1935)

SUN & MOON

Sunrise today6:30 AM

Sunset tonight5:47 PM

Moonrise today4:25 AM

Moonset today2:07 PM

New

First

Full

Last

Mar 6

Mar 14

Mar 20

Mar 27

POP: Probability of Precipitation; The patented AccuWeather.com RealFeel Temperature® is an exclusive index of the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine intensity, cloudiness, precipitation, pressure and elevation on the human body. Shown are the highest and lowest values for each day.

CROSSCURRENT

By
King Features

ACROSS

1. Banner

5. Ayes' opponents

9. Water barrier

12. Continental coin

13. Squashed circle

14. "-- Got a Secret"

15. First victim

16. Stage statuary

17. Still, in verse

18. Peruse

19. Squid squirt

20. Mentor

21. Will Ferrell Christmas movie

23. Swelled head

25. PBS dinosaur

28. Intertwine

32. Underwater gear

33. Hatred

34. Swear (to)

36. Refines, as ore

37. Devoured

38. Coop denizen

39. Rude one

42. Expert

44. Birthday party essential

48. Clumsy boat

49. Start a garden

50. One side of the Urals

51. Tavern

52. Be in charge of

53. Dregs

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12					13					14		
15					16					17		
18					19				20			
			21	22			23	24				
25	26	27					28			29	30	31
32							33					
34					35		36					
			37				38					
39	40	41			42	43			44	45	46	47
48					49				50			
51					52				53			
54					55				56			

54. -- carte

55. Catch sight of

56. Top pick, slangily

DOWN

1. Dread

2. Garage job

3. Vicinity

4. Nicklaus nickname, with "The"

5. Inform

6. Shakespeare's river

7. Northerner

8. Crafty

9. God, in Grenoble

10. State

11. Waiter's handout

20. Aaron's idol

22. Minimum

24. Travelocity mascot

25. Merit-badge org.

26. Performance

27. Trench

29. Have a bug

30. Snip

31. Type measures

35. Traditional prairie residences

36. Cheaply imitative

39. Ali --

40. Exam format

41. Gumbo need

43. Harvest

45. On the briny

46. Ukraine's capital

47. Facility

49. The girl

SUDOCURRENT

		1	6				5	
				4	3			2
	8						1	
							6	
	4		9	7	2	3		
							7	8
4			3					
		8			6		7	
	3			5				

Answers for Feb. 22 Puzzles

B	L	O	C		S	H	U	T		U	N	T	A	P	
O	A	T	H		T	O	L	E		N	Y	A	L	A	
O	K	T	A		A	O	N	E		L	X	X	I	V	
S	H	O	R	T	C	H	A	N	G	E		I	K	E	
				I	O	T	A			L	A	D	D	E	R
B	Y	G	O	N	E		P	O	O	R	E	R			
L	O	O	T	S		R	E	C	O	N	C	I	L	E	
A	Y	R			S	T	E	A	M			V	E	E	
H	O	M	E	H	E	L	P	S		S	M	E	A	R	
		A	D	A	P	T	S		D	E	A	R	L	Y	
R	U	N	O	U	T			S	L	E	W				
O	R	D		B	A	N	A	N	A	S	K	I	N	S	
A	B	I	D	E		O	K	A	Y		I	D	E	A	
R	A	Z	O	R		D	E	K	E		S	L	A	M	
S	N	E	C	K		S	E	E	R		H	Y	P	E	

3	4	6	9	2	7	5	8	1
2	8	7	5	1	3	6	9	4
9	5	1	8	6	4	3	7	2
4	9	3	1	8	5	2	6	7
1	7	2	3	9	6	4	5	8
5	6	8	7	4	2	1	3	9
6	1	5	4	7	8	9	2	3
8	2	9	6	3	1	7	4	5
7	3	4	2	5	9	8	1	6

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Answers will be published next week.
See highlandscurrent.org/puzzle for interactive versions.



Haldane Girls Lone Survivor in State Tournament



Julia Rotando, the only senior on the Haldane team, scored seven points in the title game.

Haldane and Beacon boys fall to higher seeds



Haldane won its sixth straight Section 1, Class C championship.

Photos by Scott Warren



Bela Monteleone, who was named the tournament MVP, drives against a Keio defender.

By Skip Pearlman

The third-seeded Haldane High School girls' basketball team brought home its sixth consecutive Section 1, Class C championship on Saturday (Feb. 23), easily defeating Keio Academy, 53-22, in a game played at Pace University.

Haldane junior Bela Monteleone was named the tournament MVP, and she and junior Olivia McDermott were named to the All-Tournament team.

Haldane will play at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5, at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh against Millbrook (the defending state champion, currently ranked No. 1 in Class C by the New York State Sports-writers Association) or S.S. Seward, who were scheduled to play Thursday (Feb. 28) for the Section 9 title.

If Haldane wins, it will advance to the regional finals, and the winner of that game goes to the Class C final four. The Blue Devils reached the final four in 2012 and 2014; their most recent state title was in 2008.

The Blue Devils advanced to the Section 1 title game by beating No. 2 Hamilton, 62-37, two days earlier at the Westchester County Center.

Against Keio, Olivia McDermott led Haldane with 15 points, Bela Monteleone added 12, and Julia Rotando had seven. In the win over Hamilton, Monteleone led the team with a season-high 26 points. Rotando had 11, and McDermott added nine.

Coach Tyrone Searight said that while the Blue Devils' record (7-15) may not look impressive, the team played many talented teams, often from larger schools, to prepare for the playoffs.

"Now we're playing for an even bigger game," the coach said. "We are playing the

best basketball of the season." To advance, "we have to play as mistake-free as possible. If we limit our turnovers and play well, I like our chances."

Haldane boys

The Haldane boys found themselves in a hole early in their Class C semifinal game against Hamilton on Feb. 21 at the Westchester County Center and were unable to climb out, dropping a 58-47 decision to the No. 2 seed.

Haldane, the third seed in a four-team field, opened the game with a 6-0 lead but Hamilton responded with a run of its own, going up 21-8 by the end of the first quarter. It led by as many as 18 points in the second half.

"Hamilton put good pressure on us in the early minutes, and we made some bad decisions," said Coach Joe Virgadamo. Being down early was "tough on the guys," he said, although he noted the Blue Devils at one point cut Hamilton's lead to four.

The team didn't shoot well, he said, hitting

only one three-pointer. "Credit Hamilton's defensive pressure; they got us uncomfortable."

Matt Champlin led Haldane (14-7), with 17 points, followed by Mame Diba with 16 and Alex Kubik with 10. Diba was named to the All-Tournament team.

Hamilton was defeated on Feb. 23 by Tuckahoe, 59-45, in the title game.

Beacon boys

The Beacon boys, seeded No. 11 in the Section 1, Class A tournament, scored an upset at No. 6 Somers on Feb. 21 but fell at No. 2 Horace Greeley (Chappaqua), 82-66, in a quarterfinal game two days later.

The Bulldogs (15-7) were in the game until the third quarter, when Greeley surged and put the contest out of reach.

"We got into foul trouble early on," Coach Scott Timpano said. "And there was a disparity in the fouls — we had 21 and they had 11. We had trouble getting into a flow. They had a nice run in the third that kind of doomed us."



Matt Champlin led Haldane with 17 points against Hamilton.

Photo by Amy Kubik

"They're a great team; they're good at every position," Timpano added. "They probably have the best big man [freshman Nicholas Townsend] in the section. It's tough stopping him."

Dayi'on Thompson had a career-high 41 points for the Bulldogs, while Aaron Davis contributed 11 points and six assists and Ebow Simpson had four points to go with eight rebounds. In Beacon's win over Somers, Thompson had 33 points, Davis added 14 and Willie Rivera and Manny Garner each had eight.

The Bulldogs were up by 15 points at halftime before Somers made a comeback, but Beacon closed it out for a 75-70 victory. "They had a big three-point outburst in the second half," said Timpano. "It was one of our harder-fought games."

The semifinals of the Class A tournament were scheduled for Feb. 28, with No. 1 Poughkeepsie (19-3) facing No. 5 Rye (19-3) and Greeley (20-2) taking on No. 2 Tappan Zee (22-0).

Now that Beacon's season is over, three senior players — Davis, William Rivera and Demetrius Galloway — plan to focus on organizing a summer league in Beacon for players ages 16 to 19.

"We've noticed the lack of competition in other summer leagues and know we have the potential to bring kids together from all other towns to compete at a high level," they wrote on an online fundraising page at gofundme.com/jgab-summer-league that so far has raised \$900 of its \$3,000 goal to pay for court rentals, referees and uniforms.

"We are great friends who've been playing basketball for our entire lives," the players wrote. "We're very passionate about this sport and more importantly our community and our peers."